



# Australian Bureau of Statistics

## 6206.0 - Labour Force Experience, Australia, Feb 2011

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## Summary

### Main Features

**NOTE:** This is the final issue of [6206.0 - Labour Force Experience, Australia, Feb 2011. This information is now available in Participation, Job Search and Mobility (cat. no. 6226.0).]

More information regarding changes to the supplementary survey programme can be found in Information paper: Outcomes of the Labour Household Surveys Content Review, 2012 (cat. no. 6107.0), or contact [labourforce@abs.gov.au](mailto:labourforce@abs.gov.au)

### NOTES

#### ABOUT THIS PUBLICATION

This publication presents information about the labour force experience of persons aged 15 years and over during the 12 months ending February 2011. It presents information about time spent in labour force activities, including episodes of working or looking for work, and time spent out of the labour force.

The statistics in this publication were compiled from data collected in the Labour Force Experience Survey conducted throughout Australia in February 2011 as a supplement to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) monthly Labour Force Survey (LFS).

For this publication, labour force activity over a 12-month period was determined from a more limited set of questions than is used in the monthly Labour Force Survey (LFS). For this reason, the terms **worked** and **looked for work** are used, rather than the more precisely defined terms **employed** and **unemployed**, as used in the LFS. In this survey, the concepts **worked** and **looked for work** are used to determine whether a person was **in the labour force during the year**. Therefore, this concept is also based on a more limited set of questions than the Labour Force Survey.

Labour force experience relates to a person's labour force activities over a 12-month period. Labour force activity consists of either working or looking for work.

This survey measured the number of weeks in which persons were engaged in these labour force activities during the year, the number of spells of looking for work during the year and the main activity of persons when not in the labour force.

#### IMPACT OF NATURAL DISASTERS

No significant operational difficulties were experienced in conducting the LFS in February 2011. A small number of households from the sample were not able to be enumerated due to either flood or cyclone damage to the dwelling, or road closures preventing access to the dwelling. The small amount of sample loss did not have a statistically significant impact on the estimates. For further information on how the ABS responded to the Queensland floods refer to the article Impact of the Floods on the Labour Force Survey in the January 2011 issue of Labour Force, Australia (cat. no. 6202.0).

## CHANGES IN THIS ISSUE

Tables presenting data for persons aged 15-69 years have been removed from this issue as the scope of this survey has applied to all persons aged 15 years and over since 2007.

## FUTURE ISSUES

As part of a review of supplementary surveys to the monthly LFS, this issue of Labour Force Experience may be the last.

## ROUNDING

As estimates have been rounded, discrepancies may occur between sums of component items and totals.

## INQUIRIES

For further information about these and related statistics, contact the National Information and Referral Service on 1300 135 070 or Labour Market Statistics Section on Canberra (02) 6252 7206, email <labour.statistics@abs.gov.au>.

# Conceptual Framework

## CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

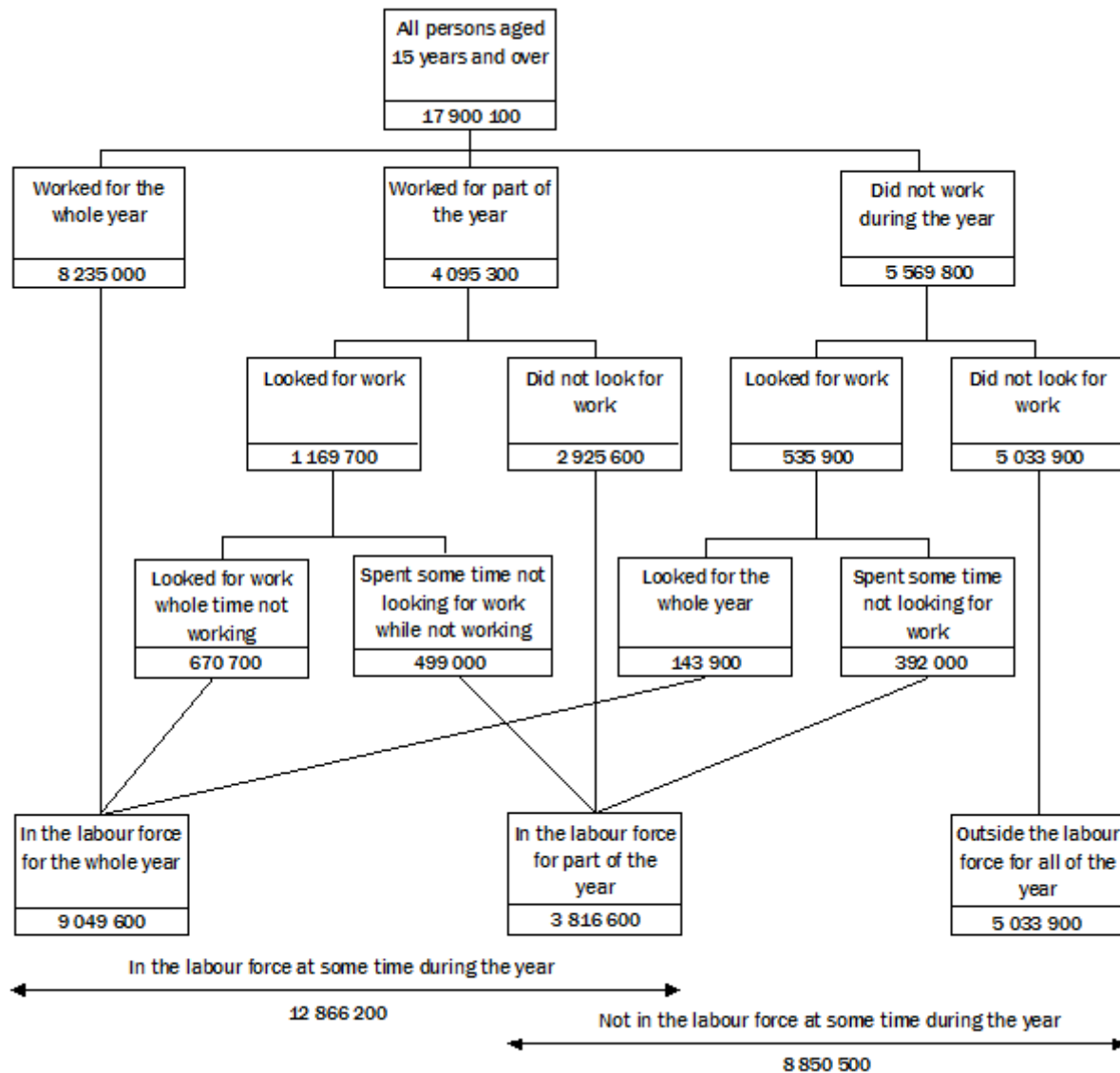
## CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The following diagram illustrates the conceptual framework for the Labour Force Experience Survey. Persons aged 15 years and over were classified according to their labour force activity over a 12-month period, that is, whether they were working or looking for work.

The framework differentiates between persons who worked for the whole year, part of the year or did not work during the year. Persons who worked part of the year or did not work during the year were asked whether they looked for work during the year. Persons who looked for work were also asked about the time they spent looking for work.

Note that the terms **worked** and **looked for work** are not the same as the more precisely defined terms **employed** and **unemployed**, which are used in the monthly Labour Force

Survey to describe current labour force status. See the Glossary for the definitions of these terms.



## Summary of Findings

### SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

#### ALL PERSONS

In February 2011, there were 17.9 million persons aged 15 years and over. During the 12 months to February 2011, 75% of these persons did not change their labour force status. Other characteristics of persons aged 15 years and over at February 2011 included:

- 12.3 million persons worked at some time during the year, of whom 8.2 million (67%) spent the whole year working;
- 1.7 million persons looked for work at some time during the year, of whom 143,900 (8%) spent the whole year looking for work; and
- 8.9 million persons were classified as 'Not in the labour force' at some time during the

year, of whom 5.0 million (57%) remained 'Not in the labour force' for the whole of this 12 month period.

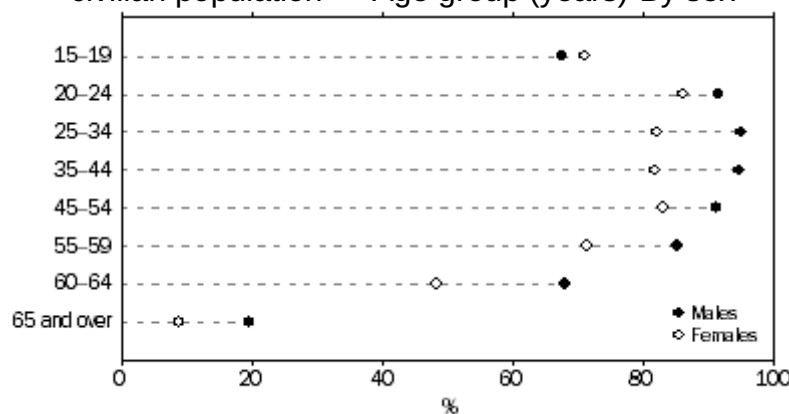
## Participation in the labour force

There were 12.9 million persons aged 15 years and over who participated in the labour force at some time during the year ending February 2011 (78% of males and 66% of females). That is, 72% of Australians aged 15 years and over either worked or looked for work at some time during this period (the same as in 2009).

Of the persons who were in the labour force at some time during the 12 months ending February 2011, 70% spent the whole year in the labour force and 17% spent from 39 to under 52 weeks in the labour force.

The persons with the highest proportion of participation in the labour force at some time during the year ending February 2011 were those aged 20-34 years (89%), closely followed by 35-44 year olds (88%) and 45-54 year olds (87%).

**Labour force participation during the year ending February 2009, Proportion of the civilian population — Age group (years)-By sex**



Participation for males was at a higher rate than females in all age groups except for those aged 15-19, where participation for females (71%) was at a slightly higher rate than for males (67%). Among males, the age group with the highest rate of participation was those aged 25-34 (95%), whilst for females it was those aged 20-24 (86%).

## PERSONS WHO WORKED AT SOME TIME DURING THE YEAR

Some 12.3 million persons aged 15 years and over worked at some time during the year ending February 2011. Of these, 6.6 million (54%) were males and 5.7 million (46%) were females. Approximately 70% of the males worked for the entire 52 weeks, compared to 63% of the females.

Of those persons who worked at some time during the year ending February 2011:

- 65% only worked full-time hours (77% of males and 50% of females);
- 26% only worked part-time hours (14% of males and 39% of females); and
- 10% worked a combination of full-time and part-time hours (9% of males and 11% of females).

Persons who worked only full-time during the year were more likely to work all year and less likely to change employers or businesses than those who only worked part-time.

The majority of persons (80%) who only worked full-time worked for the whole year, compared to 42% of persons who only worked part-time hours.

The majority of persons (79%) who worked at some time during the year ending February 2011 had only one employer or business during the 12 months. About 21% of persons who only worked part-time hours had two or more employers or businesses during the year, compared to 17% of persons who only worked full-time.

## PERSONS WHO LOOKED FOR WORK AT SOME TIME DURING THE YEAR

There were 1.7 million persons aged 15 years and over who looked for work at some time during the year ending February 2011 (906,800 males and 798,800 females). Of these, 69% also worked during the year.

Of those persons who looked for work at some time during this 12 month period:

- 16% looked for work from 1 to under 4 weeks;
- 37% looked for work from 4 to under 13 weeks;
- 18% looked for work from 13 to under 26 weeks;
- 20% looked for work from 26 to under 52 weeks; and
- 8% looked for work the whole year.

For the majority of these persons (75%), the time spent looking for work during this 12 month period was over a single period or spell, however some persons had a number of spells of looking for work.

- 11% had 2 spells looking for work; and
- 14% had 3 or more spells looking for work.

**Mean duration of time spent looking for work, By age group (years) — By sex**



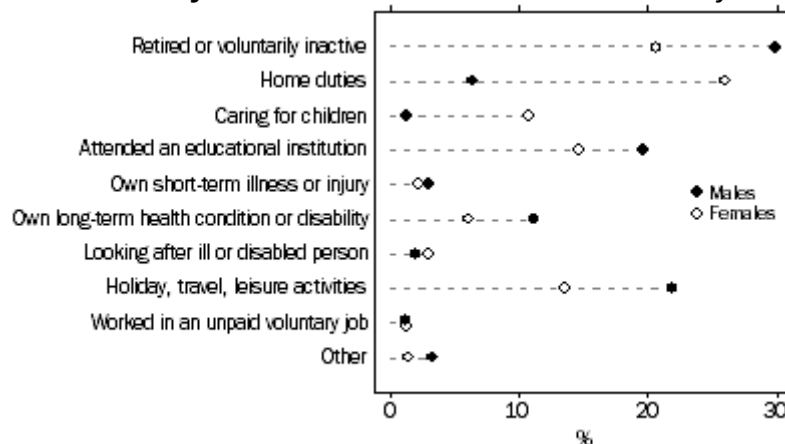
The mean duration of time spent looking for work was 17.5 weeks (up from 15.9 weeks in 2009). On average, females who looked for work spent less time doing so (16.7 weeks) than males (18.2 weeks). On average, those aged 55 years and over tended to spend the most time looking for work (22 weeks), while those aged 15-19 years spent the least time (15.2 weeks).

## PERSONS WHO WERE NOT IN THE LABOUR FORCE AT SOME TIME DURING THE YEAR

There were 8.9 million persons aged 15 years and over who were outside the labour force at some time during the year ending February 2011. Of these:

- 58% were females;
- 57% remained outside the labour force for the whole of this 12 month period; and
- 24% were not in the labour force from 1 to under 13 weeks.

**Main activity when not in the labour force — By sex**



The main activities most commonly reported by persons while outside the labour force were:

- 'Retired or voluntarily inactive' (30% of males and 21% of females);
- 'Holiday, travel or leisure activities' (22% of males and 14% of females);
- 'Attended an educational institution' (20% of males and 15% of females); and
- 'Home duties' (6% of males and 26% of females).

## About this Release

Provides information on the labour force experience of persons aged 15 years and over during the year prior to the survey. Labour force experience can be described in terms of labour force activities undertaken by persons in a 12-month period, namely working and looking for work. Details include the number of weeks spent working, looking for work, or out of the labour force during the year. Estimates can be cross-classified by labour force demographics such as state, sex, age and marital status and birthplace.

## Explanatory Notes

### Explanatory Notes

# EXPLANATORY NOTES

## INTRODUCTION

**1** The statistics in this publication were compiled from data collected in the Labour Force Experience Survey conducted throughout Australia in February 2011 as a supplement to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) monthly Labour Force Survey (LFS). Respondents to the LFS who fell within the scope of the supplementary survey were asked further questions.

**2** The publication Labour Force, Australia (cat. no. 6202.0) contains information about survey design, sample redesign, scope, coverage and population benchmarks relevant to the monthly LFS, which also applies to supplementary surveys. It also contains definitions of demographic and labour force characteristics, and information about telephone interviewing which are relevant to both the monthly LFS and supplementary surveys.

## CONCEPTS, SOURCES AND METHODS

**3** The conceptual framework used in Australia's LFS aligns closely with the standards and guidelines set out in Resolutions of the International Conference of Labour Statisticians. Descriptions of the underlying concepts and structure of Australia's labour force statistics, and the sources and methods used in compiling these estimates, are presented in Labour Statistics: Concepts, Sources and Methods (cat. no. 6102.0.55.001).

## SCOPE

**4** The scope of the LFS is restricted to persons aged 15 years and over and excludes the following persons:

- members of the permanent defence forces;
- certain diplomatic personnel of overseas governments, customarily excluded from the Census and estimated populations;
- overseas residents in Australia; and
- members of non-Australian defence forces (and their dependants).

**5** Students at boarding schools, patients in hospitals, residents of homes (e.g. retirement homes, homes for persons with disabilities), and inmates of prisons are excluded from all supplementary surveys.

**6** This supplementary survey was conducted in both urban and rural areas in all states and territories, but excluded persons living in Indigenous communities in very remote parts of Australia. Visitors to private dwellings are also excluded from this survey.

## COVERAGE

**7** The estimates in this publication relate to persons covered by the survey in February 2011. In the LFS, coverage rules are applied which aim to ensure that each person is associated with only one dwelling, and hence has only one chance of selection in the survey. See Labour Force, Australia (cat. no. 6202.0) for more details.

## **SAMPLE SIZE**

**8** Supplementary surveys are not conducted on the full LFS sample. Since August 1994 the sample for supplementary surveys has been restricted to no more than seven-eighths of the LFS sample.

**9** The LFS sample size in February 2011 was approximately 33% larger than the sample size in February 2009. This is due to the re-instatement of sample that was reduced from the LFS and supplementary surveys from July 2008 to November 2009. Detailed information about the sample re-instatement is provided in Information Paper: Labour Force Survey Sample Design, Nov 2007 (Third edition) (cat. no. 6269.0).

**10** The initial sample for the February 2011 LFS consisted of 36,250 private dwelling households and special dwelling units. Of the 29,124 private dwelling households and special dwelling units that remained in the survey after sample loss (e.g. households selected in the survey which had no residents in scope for the LFS, vacant or derelict dwellings and dwellings under construction), approximately 27,792 or 95.4%, were fully responding to the Labour Force Experience Survey. The number of completed interviews obtained from these private dwellings and special dwelling units (after taking into account scope and coverage exclusions) was 47,377.

## **RELIABILITY OF THE ESTIMATES**

**11** Estimates in this publication are subject to sampling and non-sampling errors:

- Sampling error is the difference between the published estimate and the value that would have been produced if all dwellings had been included in the survey. For more information see the Technical Note.
- Non-sampling errors are inaccuracies that occur because of imperfections in reporting by respondents and interviewers and errors made in coding and processing data. These inaccuracies may occur in any enumeration, whether it be a full count or a sample. Every effort is made to reduce the non-sampling error to a minimum by careful design of questionnaires, intensive training and supervision of interviewers, and efficient processing procedures.

## **SEASONAL FACTORS**

**12** The estimates are based on information collected in the survey month (February) and, due to seasonal factors, may not be representative of other months of the year.

## **CLASSIFICATIONS USED**

**13** Country of birth data are classified according to the Standard Australian Classification of Countries (SACC), Second Edition, 2008 (cat. no. 1269.0).

**14** Occupation data are classified according to the ANZSCO - Australian and New Zealand Standard Classifications of Occupations, First Edition, Revision 1 (cat. no. 1220.0).

**15** Industry data are classified according to Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification (ANZSIC), 2006 (Revision 1.0) (cat. no. 1292.0).



## COMPARABILITY OF TIME SERIES

**16** The Labour Force Survey estimates, and estimates from the supplementary surveys, are calculated in such a way as to sum to independent estimates of the civilian population aged 15 years and over (population benchmarks). These population benchmarks are based on Estimated Resident Population (ERP) data. Generally, revisions are made to population benchmarks after each five-yearly Census of Population and Housing (Census); however, in the second half of 2010, revisions were applied to population benchmarks, including those used for the 2011 Labour Force Experience Survey, to take into account more up to date information about Net Overseas Migration (a component of the ERP). For more details on population benchmarks, see the Explanatory Notes in Labour Force, Australia (cat. no. 6202.0), and for details about the revisions made, see the article in the September 2010 issue of Labour Force, Australia (cat. no. 6202.0).

## COMPARABILITY WITH MONTHLY LFS STATISTICS

**17** Due to differences in the scope and sample size of this supplementary survey and that of the monthly LFS, the estimation procedure may lead to some small variations between labour force estimates from this survey and those from the LFS.

## PREVIOUS SURVEYS

**18** Results of similar surveys, conducted in February 1969, 1973, 1975, 1976, 1977, annually from February 1979 to February 1989, annually from March 1990 to March 1994, and biennially in February from 1995, have been given in previous issues of the publication Labour Force Experience, Australia (cat. no. 6206.0) and the Standard Data Service Labour Force Experience on Hardcopy, Australia (cat. no. 6206.0.40.001).

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

**19** ABS publications draw extensively on information provided freely by individuals, businesses, governments and other organisations. Their continued cooperation is very much appreciated: without it, the wide range of statistics published by the ABS would not be available. Information received by the ABS is treated in strict confidence as required by the Census and Statistics Act, 1905.

## RELATED PUBLICATIONS

**20** ABS publications which may also be of interest include:

- Career Experience, Australia (cat. no. 6254.0);
- Job Search Experience, Australia (cat. no. 6222.0);
- Labour Force, Australia (cat. no. 6202.0);
- Labour Mobility, Australia (cat. no. 6209.0);
- Labour Statistics: Concepts, Sources and Methods (cat. no. 6102.0.55.001);
- Persons Not in the Labour Force, Australia (cat. no. 6220.0); and
- Australian Labour Market Statistics (cat. no. 6105.0).

**21** Current publications and other products released by the ABS are available from the

Statistics page on the ABS website. The ABS also issues a daily Release Advice on the website which details products to be released in the week ahead.

## Glossary

### GLOSSARY

#### **Born in Australia**

Includes persons born in Australia, Norfolk Island and Australian External Territories.

#### **Employed**

Persons aged 15 years and over who, during the reference week:

- worked for one hour or more for pay, profit, commission or payment in kind, in a job or business or on a farm (comprising employees, employers and own account workers); or
- worked for one hour or more without pay in a family business or on a farm (i.e. contributing family workers); or
- were employees who had a job but were not at work and were:
  - away from work for less than four weeks up to the end of the reference week;
  - away from work for more than four weeks up to the end of the reference week and received pay for some or all of the four week period to the end of the reference week;
  - away from work as a standard work or shift arrangement;
  - on strike or locked out;
  - on workers' compensation and expected to return to their job; or
- were employers or own account workers who had a job, business or farm, but were not at work.

#### **Industry of main job**

An industry is a group of businesses or organisations that undertake similar economic activities to produce goods and/or services. In this publication, industry of main job refers to ANZSIC Division as classified according to the Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification (ANZSIC), 2006 (Revision 1.0) (cat. no. 1292.0).

#### **In the labour force at some time during the year**

Persons who had worked or looked for work for one week or more during the year. Note that the specific criteria used to determine whether persons were employed or actively looked for work, according to the LFS, were not applied.

#### **In the labour force for the whole year**

Persons who had either worked or looked for work every week for the whole year. Note that the specific criteria used to determine whether persons were employed or actively looked for work, according to the LFS, were not applied.

**In the labour force for part of the year**

Persons who had either worked or looked for work for one week or more during the year, but had some weeks when neither activity was undertaken. Note that the specific criteria used to determine whether persons were employed or actively looked for work, according to the LFS, were not applied.

**Looked for work at some time during the year**

Persons who looked for work for one week or more during the year. Note that the specific criteria used to determine whether persons actively looked for work, according to the LFS, were not applied.

**Main English-speaking countries**

The list of main English-speaking countries provided here is not an attempt to classify countries on the basis of whether or not English is the predominant or official language of each country. It is a list of the main countries from which Australia receives, or has received, significant numbers of overseas settlers who are likely to speak English. These countries comprise the United Kingdom, the Republic of Ireland, New Zealand, Canada, South Africa and the United States of America.

**Main job**

The job in which most hours are usually worked.

**Mean duration of time spent looking for work**

Obtained by dividing the aggregate number of weeks a group has been looking for work by the number of persons in that group.

**Median duration of time spent looking for work**

The duration which divides persons who looked for work into two equal groups, one comprising of persons whose time spent looking for work during the year is above the median, and the other, persons whose time spent looking is below it.

**Non-family member**

Persons for whom there is no identified couple relationship, parent-child relationship, or other blood relationship with any of the other usual residents of the household. They may live within a family household, or they may form a non-family household either as a lone person or a group household.

**Not in the labour force at some time during the year**

Persons who had neither worked nor looked for work for one week or more during the year. Note that the specific criteria used to determine whether persons were employed or actively looked for work, according to the LFS, were not applied.

**Number of employers/businesses during the year**

The number of employers/businesses for which persons worked during the year.

## **Number of spells of looking for work during the year**

The number of different periods, including the current period, during which persons were not working but were looking for a job.

## **Occupation of main job**

An occupation is a collection of jobs that are sufficiently similar in their title and tasks, skill level and skill specialisation which are grouped together for the purposes of classification. In this publication, occupation of main job refers to Major Group as defined by the ANZSCO - Australian Standard Classification of Occupations, First Edition, Revision 1 (cat. no. 1220.0).

## **Time in the labour force during the year**

The total number of weeks persons reported having either worked or looked for work during the previous year. Note that the specific criteria used to determine whether persons were employed or actively looked for work, according to the LFS, were not applied.

## **Time not in the labour force during the year**

The total number of weeks persons reported having neither worked nor looked for work during the previous year. Note that the specific criteria used to determine whether persons were employed or actively looked for work, according to the LFS, were not applied.

## **Time spent looking for work during the year**

The total number of weeks persons spent looking for work, while not working.

## **Time worked during the year**

The total number of weeks persons reported having either worked or been on paid leave. Periods of one week or more on strike or time off without pay are not classified as time worked.

## **Time worked full time during the year**

The total number of weeks persons reported as having either worked or been on paid leave during the year, minus any weeks during the year where they reported working part time.

## **Time worked part time during the year**

The response given by a respondent to the question 'For how many weeks did you work part time?'.

## **Unemployed**

Persons aged 15 years and over who were not employed during the reference week, and:

- had actively looked for full time or part time work at any time in the four weeks up to the end of the reference week and were available for work in the reference week; or
- were waiting to start a new job within four weeks from the end of the reference week and could have started in the reference week if the job had been available then.

## **Worked**

Activity in a job, business or farm, for pay, profit, commission or payment in kind; or any activity in a family business that contributed to the operation of that business although no payment was received. Includes being absent, but on paid leave, from such activity. Note that the specific criteria used to determine whether persons were employed, according to the LFS, were not applied.

### **Worked at some time during the year**

Persons who reported having worked and/or been on paid leave for one week or more during the year.

### **Worked for part of the year**

Persons who reported having worked and/or been on paid leave for part of the year.

## **Abbreviations**

### **ABBREVIATIONS**

'000	thousand
ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ANZSCO	Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations
ANZSIC	Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification
cat. no.	Catalogue number
ERP	estimated resident population
LFS	Labour Force Survey
RSE	relative standard error
SACC	Standard Australian Classification of Countries
SE	standard error
wks	weeks

## **Populations And Data Items List (Appendix)**

### **APPENDIX 1 POPULATIONS AND DATA ITEMS LIST**

#### **DATA AVAILABLE ON REQUEST**

The ABS has a range of data available on request from the Labour Force Experience Survey. This section lists the data items and populations which relate to the survey. More detailed breakdowns of some data items may also be available on request.

The population(s) for a particular data item refers to the persons in the survey to whom the data relates. Where alternative output categories are available for the same data item, these are shown and the data item name is followed by a bracketed numeral (e.g. Country of birth (2)).

For more information about the ABS data available on request, contact Client Services Section in Canberra on (02) 6252 7400, or via email <information.consultancy@abs.gov.au>.

## Population 1

All persons

## Population 2

Persons in the labour force at some time during the year ending February 2011

## Population 3

Persons who worked at some time during the year ending February 2011

## Population 4

Persons who looked for work at some time during the year ending February 2011

## Population 5

Persons who were not in the labour force at some time during the year ending February 2011

Data items		Populations
1	State or territory of usual residence	All
	New South Wales	
	Victoria	
	Queensland	
	South Australia	
	Western Australia	
	Tasmania	
	Northern Territory	
	Australian Capital Territory	
2	Area of usual residence	All
	State capital city	
	Balance of state/territory	
3	Region of usual residence	All
	Standard labour force dissemination regions	
4	Sex	All
	Males	
	Females	
5	Marital status	All
	Married	
	Not married	
6	Relationship in household	All
	Family member	
	Husband, wife or partner	
	With dependants	
	Without dependants	
	Lone Parent	
	With dependants	

	Without dependants	
	Dependent student	
	Non-dependent child	
	Other related individual	
	Non-family member	
	Lone person	
	Not living alone	
	Relationship not determined	
7A	Country of birth and period of arrival	All
	Born in Australia	
	Born overseas	
	Arrived before 1971	
	Arrived 1971-1980	
	Arrived 1981-1990	
	Arrived 1991-2000	
	Arrived 2001 to survey date	
7B	Country of birth (1)	All
	Born in Australia	
	Born overseas	
	Born in main English-speaking countries	
	Born in other than main English-speaking countries	
7C	Country of birth (2)	All
	Born in Australia	
	Born overseas	
	Oceania and Antarctica	
	North-West Europe	
	Southern and Eastern Europe	
	North Africa and the Middle East	
	South-East Asia	
	North-East Asia	
	Southern and Central Asia	
	Americas	
	Sub-Saharan Africa	
8	Age group (years)	All
	15-19	
	20-24	
	25-34	
	35-44	
	45-54	
	55-59	
	60-64	
	65 and over	
	Note: Age collected in single years	
9	Labour force status at February 2011	All
	In the labour force	
	Working	
	Looking for work	
	Not in the labour force	
10	Status in employment at February 2011	All
	Working at February 2011	
	Employee	
	Employer	
	Own account worker	
	Contributing family worker	
	Not working at February 2011	
11	Full-time or part-time status at February 2011	All
	Working at February 2011	
	Full-time	
	Part-time	
	Not working at February 2011	
12	Industry at February 2011	All
	Working at February 2011	
	Agriculture, forestry and fishing	
	Mining	
	Manufacturing	

		Electricity, gas, water and waste supply	
		Construction	
		Wholesale trade	
		Retail trade	
		Accommodation and food services	
		Transport, postal and warehousing	
		Information media and telecommunications	
		Financial and insurance services	
		Rental, hiring and real estate services	
		Professional, scientific and technical services	
		Administrative and support services	
		Public administration and safety	
		Education and training	
		Health care and social assistance	
		Arts and recreation services	
		Other services	
13	Occupation at February 2011	Not working at February 2011	All
		Working at February 2011	
		Managers	
		Professionals	
		Associated professionals	
		Technicians and trades workers	
		Advanced clerical and service workers	
		Community and personal service workers	
		Clerical and administrative workers	
		Sales workers	
		Machinery operators and drivers	
		Labourers	
14	Time in the labour force during the year	Not working at February 2011	All
		In the labour force during the year	
		1 to under 4 weeks	
		4 to under 13 weeks	
		13 to under 26 weeks	
		26 to under 39 weeks	
		39 to under 52 weeks	
		52 weeks	
15	Time worked during the year	Not in the labour force all year	All
		Worked at some time during the year	
		1 to under 4 weeks	
		4 to under 13 weeks	
		13 to under 26 weeks	
		26 to under 39 weeks	
		39 to under 52 weeks	
		52 weeks	
16	Time not in the labour force during the year	Worked for none of the year	All
		Not in the labour force at some time during the year	
		1 to under 4 weeks	
		4 to under 13 weeks	
		13 to under 26 weeks	
		26 to under 39 weeks	
		39 to under 52 weeks	
		52 weeks	
17	Number of employers/ businesses during the year	In the labour force for whole year	All
		None	
		One	
		Two	
		Three	
		Four or more	
18	Full-time or part-time status of time worked during the year		All
		Worked at some time during the year	
		All full-time	



	More full-time than part-time Full-time same as part-time More part-time than full-time All part-time Worked for none of the year	
19	Time spent looking for work during the year Looked for work at some time during the year 1 to under 4 weeks 4 to under 13 weeks 13 to under 26 weeks 26 to under 39 weeks 39 to under 52 weeks 52 weeks Did not look for work during the year	All
20	Number of spells of looking for work during the year None One Two Three Four or more	All
21	Main activity when not in the labour force Not in the labour force at some time during the year Retired or voluntarily inactive Home duties Caring for children Attended an educational institution Own short-term illness or injury Own long-term health condition or disability Looking after ill or disabled person Holiday, travel or leisure activities Worked in an unpaid voluntary job Other	All
22	Whether in the labour force for whole year Whether in the labour force at some time during the year In the labour force at some time during the year For whole year For part of year Not in the labour force all year	All
23	Whether looked for work at some time during the year Looked for work at some time during the year For whole year For part of year	All
24	Whether worked at some time during the year Worked at some time during the year For whole year For part of year	All
25	Time worked part-time during the year Worked part-time at some time during the year 1 to under 4 weeks 4 to under 13 weeks 13 to under 26 weeks 26 to under 39 weeks 39 to under 52 weeks 52 weeks Did not work part-time during the year	All
26	Time worked full-time during the year Worked full-time at some time during the year 1 to under 4 weeks 4 to under 13 weeks 13 to under 26 weeks 26 to under 39 weeks 39 to under 52 weeks 52 weeks Did not work full-time during the year	All

27	Whether had an unpaid absence from work during the year	All
	Working at February 2011	
	With current employer for one year or more	
	Had an unpaid absence from work	
	Did not have an unpaid absence from work	
	With current employer for less than one year	
	Had an unpaid absence from work	
	Did not have an unpaid absence from work	
	Not working at February 2011	
28	Time worked with current employer/business	All
	Working at February 2011	
	Under 12 months	
	Under 3 months	
	3 to under 6 months	
	6 to under 9 months	
	9 to under 12 months	
	1 to under 2 years	
	2 to under 3 years	
	3 to under 5 years	
	5 to under 10 years	
	10 years and over	
	10 to under 20 years	
	20 years and over	
	Not working at February 2011	

## Supplementary Surveys (Appendix)

### APPENDIX 2 SUPPLEMENTARY SURVEYS

#### SUPPLEMENTARY SURVEYS

The Monthly Population Survey program collects data on particular aspects of the labour force. The following is an historical list of supplementary surveys to the monthly Labour Force Survey. Data from these surveys are available on request and can be obtained by contacting the ABS.

	cat. no.	Frequency	Latest issue
<b>Monthly Population Supplementary Surveys</b>			
Characteristics of Recent Migrants, Australia(a)	6250.0	Irregular	November 2010
Child Care, Australia	4402.0	Irregular	June 2008 (Reissue)
Child Employment, Australia	6211.0	Irregular	June 2006
Education and Work, Australia	6227.0	Annual	May 2010
Employee Earnings, Benefits, and Trade Union Membership, Australia	6310.0	Annual	August 2010
Forms of Employment, Australia	6359.0	Annual	November 2010
Job Search Experience, Australia	6222.0	Annual	July 2010
Labour Force Experience, Australia	6206.0	Biennial	February 2011
Labour Mobility, Australia	6209.0	Biennial	February 2010
Locations of Work, Australia	6275.0	Irregular	November 2008
Multiple Jobholding, Australia(b)	6216.0	Irregular	August 1997
Persons Not in the Labour Force, Australia	6220.0	Annual	September 2010
Underemployed Workers, Australia	6265.0	Annual	September 2010

Working Time Arrangements, Australia(c)	6342.0	Irregular	November 2009
<b>Multi-Purpose Household Surveys</b>			
Barriers and Incentives to Labour Force Participation, Australia	6239.0	Biennial	2008-2009
Retirement and Retirement Intentions, Australia	6238.0	Biennial	2008-2009
Work-Related Injuries, Australia	6324.0	Irregular	2009-2010

(a) This product replaces the publication Labour Force Status and Other Characteristics of Recent Migrants, Australia (cat. no. 6250.0).

(b) Latest data available on request July 2001.

(c) This product replaces the publication Working Arrangements, Australia (cat. no. 6342.0).

## Quality Declaration - Summary

### QUALITY DECLARATION - SUMMARY

#### INSTITUTIONAL ENVIRONMENT

For information on the institutional environment of the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), including the legislative obligations of the ABS, financing and governance arrangements, and mechanisms for scrutiny of ABS operations, please see ABS Institutional Environment.

#### RELEVANCE

The Labour Force Experience Survey provides detailed information about the labour force activities of people aged 15 years and over during the 12 months to February of the reference year. The survey measures time spent in labour force activities, including episodes of working or looking for work, and time spent out of the labour force.

Estimates from the survey are used to monitor the extent and nature of labour force participation over an extended period and to complement estimates from the monthly Labour Force Survey in the analysis of labour market dynamics. The information is used to construct profiles of various groups within the labour force, particularly the unemployed.

Information is available on time worked during the year, whether in the labour force at some time during the year, number of employers/businesses during the year, time spent looking for work during the year, number of spells of looking for work during the year, main activity when not in the labour force, and whether had an unpaid absence from work during the year. Further information such as occupation, industry and time with current employer are available for people who were employed at February 2011.

#### TIMELINESS

The estimates in this publication are sourced from the Labour Force Experience Survey which is conducted biennially during February as a supplement to the monthly Labour Force Survey. Results from this survey are released in the publication, Labour Force Experience, Australia (cat. no. 6206.0), approximately six months after the collection period.

#### ACCURACY

The Labour Force Survey (LFS) sample size in February 2011 was approximately 33%

higher than the sample size in February 2009. This is due to re-instatement of sample that was reduced from LFS and supplementary surveys from July 2008 to November 2009. Detailed information about the sample re-instatement is provided in Information Paper: Labour Force Survey Sample Design, Nov 2007 (Third edition) (cat. no. 6269.0).

Estimates from the Labour Force Experience Survey are subject to sampling and non-sampling errors. Relative standard error is a measure of the size of the sampling error affecting an estimate, i.e. the error introduced by basing estimates on a sample of the population rather than the full population. Non-sampling errors are inaccuracies that occur because of imperfections in reporting by respondents and interviewers, and errors made in coding and processing data. Relative Standard Errors for all estimates in the publication are available in the Technical Note.

## **COHERENCE**

The ABS has been conducting the Labour Force Experience Survey since 1969. Since February 1995 the survey has been conducted biennially. Key recent changes made to the Labour Force Experience Survey include:

- revisions of population benchmarks;
- changes in the scope of the survey;
- changes in the collection of a respondent's main activity when not in the labour force.

For more information on changes to the survey see Chapter 21.5 of Labour Statistics: Concepts, Sources and Methods (cat. no. 6102.0.55.001) or the Explanatory Notes of the publication, Labour Force Experience, Australia (cat. no. 6206.0).

## **INTERPRETABILITY**

The Labour Force Experience publication contains tables with footnoted data and a Summary of Findings to aid interpretation of the results of the survey. Detailed Explanatory Notes, Technical Note and a Glossary are also included providing information on the terminology, classifications and other technical aspects associated with these statistics.

Further commentary is often available through articles and data published in other ABS products, including:

- Australian Labour Market Statistics (cat. no. 6105.0) - refer to the Article archive for past articles.
- Australian Social Trends (cat. no. 4102.0) - refer to the Article archive for past articles.
- Year Book, Australia (cat. no. 1301.0) - refer to the 'Labour' chapter.

## **ACCESSIBILITY**

The main product from the survey is a PDF publication, Labour Force Experience, Australia (cat. no. 6206.0), released electronically via the ABS website. Additional data may be available on request. For a list of data items available see Appendix 1 of the publication. Note that detailed data can be subject to high relative standard errors, and in some cases, may result in data being confidentialised.

For further information about these or related statistics, contact the National Information and Referral Centre on 1300 135 070 or contact Labour Market Statistics in Canberra (02) 6252 7206, or by email to <labour.statistics@abs.gov.au>.

## Quality Declaration - Relevance

### **Whether in the labour force at some time during the year**

For the Labour Force Experience Survey, labour force activity over a 12-month period was determined from a more limited set of questions than is used in the monthly Labour Force Survey. For this reason, the terms worked and looked for work are used, rather than the more precisely defined terms employed and unemployed, as used in the Labour Force Survey. In this survey, the concepts worked and looked for work are used to determine whether a person was in the labour force during the year. Therefore, this concept is also based on a more limited set of questions than the Labour Force Survey.

### **Number of spells of looking for work during the year**

The number of different periods, including the current period, during which a person was not working but was looking for a job.

## Quality Declaration - Coherence

Key changes made to Labour Force Experience Survey include:

### **REVISION OF POPULATION BENCHMARKS**

The Labour Force Survey estimates, and estimates from the supplementary surveys, are calculated in such a way as to sum to independent estimates of the civilian population aged 15 years and over (population benchmarks). These population benchmarks are based on Estimated Resident Population (ERP) data. Generally, revisions are made to population benchmarks after each five-yearly Census of Population and Housing (Census), however in the second half of 2010 revisions were applied to population benchmarks, including those used for the 2011 Labour Force Experience Survey, to take into account more up to date information about Net Overseas Migration (a component of the ERP). For more details on population benchmarks, see the Explanatory Notes in Labour Force, Australia (cat. no. 6202.0), and for details about the revisions made, see the article in the September 2010 issue of Labour Force, Australia (cat. no. 6202.0).

### **CHANGES IN THE SCOPE OF THE SURVEY**

From February 2009 the Labour Force Experience Survey was conducted in both urban and rural areas in all states and territories, but excluded people living in Indigenous communities in very remote parts of Australia.

### **MAIN ACTIVITY WHEN NOT IN THE LABOUR FORCE**

Prior to February 2009, the data item 'Main activity when not in the Labour Force' included the category 'home duties or child care'. From February 2009, this category has been split into two separate categories: 'home duties' and 'caring for children'.

Prior to February 2009, the data item 'Main activity when not in the Labour Force' included the categories 'own illness or injury' and 'own disability or handicap'. From February 2009, these categories have been collected as 'own short-term illness or injury' and 'own long-term health condition or disability' respectively. More information can be found in the Explanatory Notes of the publication Labour Force Experience, Australia (cat. no. 6206.0).

## **Data Quality (Technical Note)**

### **TECHNICAL NOTE DATA QUALITY**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

**1** Since estimates in this publication are based on information obtained from occupants of a sample of dwellings, they are subject to sampling variability. That is, they may differ from those estimates that would have been produced if all dwellings had been included in the survey. One measure of the likely difference is given by the standard error (SE), which indicates the extent to which an estimate might have varied by chance because only a sample of dwellings was included. There are about two chances in three (67%) that a sample estimate will differ by less than one SE from the number that would have been obtained if all dwellings had been included, and about 19 chances in 20 (95%) that the difference will be less than two SEs. Another measure of the likely difference is the relative standard error (RSE), which is obtained by expressing the SE as a percentage of the estimate.

**2** Due to space limitations, it is impractical to print the SE of each estimate in the publication. Instead, a table of SEs is provided to enable readers to determine the SE for an estimate from the size of that estimate (see table T1). The SE table is derived from a mathematical model, referred to as the 'SE model', which is created using data from a number of past Labour Force Surveys. It should be noted that the SE model only gives an approximate value for the SE for any particular estimate, since there is some minor variation between SEs for different estimates of the same size.

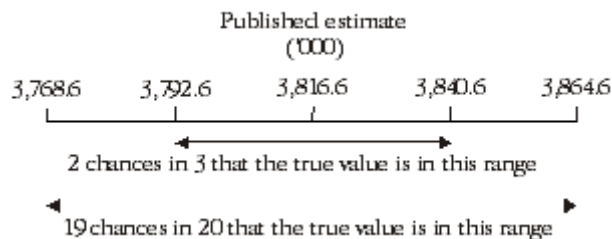
**3** The LFS sample size in February 2011 was approximately one-third higher than the sample size in February 2009. This is due to re-instatement of sample that was reduced from the LFS and supplementary surveys from July 2008 to November 2009. Detailed information about the sample re-instatement is provided in Information Paper: Labour Force Survey Sample Design, Nov 2007 (Third edition) (cat. no. 6269.0).

#### **CALCULATION OF STANDARD ERRORS**

**4** An example of the calculation and the use of SEs in relation to estimates of persons is as follows. Table 1 shows that the estimated number of persons aged 15 years and over in the labour force for part of the year was 3,816,600. Since this estimate is between 2,000,000 and 5,000,000, table T1 shows that the SE for Australia will be between 17,050 and 28,450 and can be approximated by interpolation using the following general formula:

$$\begin{aligned}
& SE \text{ of estimate} \\
& = \text{lower SE} + \left( \left( \frac{\text{size of estimate} - \text{lower estimate}}{\text{upper estimate} - \text{lower estimate}} \right) \times (\text{upper SE} - \text{lower SE}) \right) \\
& = 17,050 + \left( \left( \frac{3,816,600 - 2,000,000}{5,000,000 - 2,000,000} \right) \times (28,450 - 17,050) \right) \\
& = 24,000 \text{ (rounded to the nearest 100)}
\end{aligned}$$

**5** There are about two chances in three that the value that would have been produced if all dwellings had been included in the survey will fall in the range 3,792,600 to 3,840,600, and about 19 chances in 20 that the value will fall within the range 3,768,600 to 3,864,600. This example is illustrated in the diagram below:



**6** In general, the size of the SE increases as the size of the estimate increases. Conversely, the RSE decreases as the size of the estimate increases. Very small estimates are thus subject to such high RSEs that their value for most practical purposes is unreliable. In the tables in this publication, only estimates with RSEs of 25% or less are considered reliable for most purposes. Estimates with RSEs greater than 25% but less than or equal to 50% are preceded by an asterisk (e.g. \*3.4) to indicate they are subject to high SEs and should be used with caution. Estimates with RSEs of greater than 50%, preceded by a double asterisk (e.g. \*\*0.3), are considered too unreliable for general use and should only be used to aggregate with other estimates to provide derived estimates with RSEs of less than 25%. Table T2 presents the levels at which estimates have RSEs of 25% and 50%.

## MEANS AND MEDIANS

**7** The RSEs of estimates of mean and median duration of time spent looking for work are obtained by first finding the RSE of the estimate of the total number of persons contributing to the estimate (see table T1) and then multiplying the resulting number by the following factors:

- mean duration of time spent looking for work (weeks): 0.93
- median duration of time spent looking for work (weeks): 1.04

**8** The following is an example of the calculation of SEs where the use of a factor is required. Table 7 shows that the estimated number of males aged 15 years and over who looked for work at some time during the year was 906,800 with a median duration of time spent looking for work of 12 weeks. The SE of 906,800 can be calculated from table T1 (by interpolation) as 11,100. To convert this to an RSE we express the SE as a percentage of the estimate, or  $11,100/906,800 = 1.2\%$ .

**9** The RSE of the estimate of median duration of time spent looking for work for males aged 15 years and over is calculated by multiplying this number (1.2%) by the appropriate factor shown in paragraph 7 (in this case 1.04):  $1.2 \times 1.04 = 1.2\%$ . The approximate SE of this estimate of median duration of time spent looking for work for males aged 15 years and over

is therefore 1.2% of 12 weeks, i.e. about 0.1 weeks. Therefore, there are two chances in three that the median duration of time spent looking for work for males aged 15 years and over that would have been obtained if all dwellings had been included in the survey would have been within the range 11.9 weeks to 12.1 weeks, and about 19 chances in 20 that it would have been within the range 11.8 weeks to 12.2 weeks.

**10** Mean and median estimates produced from population estimates smaller than the values in T2 have RSEs larger than 25% and should be used with caution. Table T2 also indicates the size of population estimates that would produce means and medians with RSEs greater than 50%, which are considered too unreliable for general use.

## PROPORTIONS AND PERCENTAGES

**11** Proportions and percentages formed from the ratio of two estimates are also subject to sampling errors. The size of the error depends on the accuracy of both the numerator and the denominator. A formula to approximate the RSE of a proportion is given below. This formula is only valid when x is a subset of y:

$$RSE\left(\frac{x}{y}\right) = \sqrt{[RSE(x)]^2 - [RSE(y)]^2}$$

**12** Considering the example above, of the 3,816,600 persons aged 15 years and over in the labour force for part of the year, 499,000, or 13.1%, looked for work at some time during the year. The SE of 499,000, may be calculated by interpolation as 8,300. To convert this to an RSE we express the SE as a percentage of the estimate, or  $8,300/499,000 = 1.7\%$ . The SE for 3,816,600 was calculated previously as 24,000, which converted to an RSE is  $24,000/3,816,600 = 0.6\%$ . Applying the above formula, the RSE of the proportion is:

$$RSE = \sqrt{(1.7)^2 - (0.6)^2} = 1.6\%$$

**13** The SE for the proportion, 13.1%, of persons aged 15 years and over who looked for work at some time during the year is 0.2 percentage points, calculated as  $(13.1/100) \times 1.6$ . There are about two chances in three that the proportion of persons aged 15 years and over who looked for work at some time during the year is between 12.9% and 13.3%, and 19 chances in 20 that the proportion is within the range 12.7% to 13.5%.

## DIFFERENCES

**14** Published estimates may also be used to calculate the difference between two survey estimates (of numbers or percentages). Such an estimate is subject to sampling error. The sampling error of the difference between two estimates depends on their SEs and the relationship (correlation) between them. An approximate SE of the difference between two estimates (x-y) may be calculated by the following formula:

$$SE(x-y) = \sqrt{[SE(x)]^2 + [SE(y)]^2}$$

**15** While this formula will only be exact for differences between separate and uncorrelated characteristics or subpopulations, it is expected to provide a good approximation for all differences likely to be of interest in this publication.

## STANDARD ERRORS

### T1 STANDARD ERRORS OF ESTIMATES



Size of estimate (persons)	NSW no.	Vic. no.	Qld. no.	SA no.	WA no.	Tas. no.	NT no.	ACT no.	AUST.	
									SE no.	RSE %
100	290	290	220	180	220	110	80	100	110	110.0
200	400	380	320	240	290	160	120	170	190	95.0
300	470	440	390	280	340	190	150	210	260	86.7
500	580	540	500	340	420	240	190	270	380	76.0
700	660	620	580	390	480	270	230	300	480	68.6
1,000	760	710	680	450	550	310	260	330	610	61.0
1,500	900	830	810	530	640	360	310	360	780	52.0
2,000	1 010	930	910	590	710	390	340	390	920	46.0
2,500	1 100	1 000	1 000	650	800	400	350	400	1 050	42.0
3,000	1 200	1 100	1 050	700	850	450	400	450	1 150	38.3
3,500	1 250	1 150	1 100	700	900	450	400	450	1 250	35.7
4,000	1 300	1 200	1 200	750	900	500	450	450	1 350	33.8
5,000	1 450	1 300	1 250	800	1 000	500	450	500	1 500	30.0
7,000	1 650	1 500	1 450	900	1 150	600	550	600	1 700	24.3
10,000	1 850	1 700	1 600	1 050	1 300	700	700	700	2 000	20.0
15,000	2 150	1 950	1 800	1 200	1 500	850	1 000	850	2 350	15.7
20,000	2 400	2 200	1 950	1 350	1 650	1 000	1 250	1 000	2 550	12.8
30,000	2 800	2 550	2 250	1 550	1 900	1 250	1 750	1 250	2 900	9.7
40,000	3 100	2 800	2 500	1 800	2 100	1 500	2 250	1 500	3 150	7.9
50,000	3 350	3 050	2 750	2 000	2 300	1 700	2 650	1 650	3 400	6.8
100,000	4 250	4 000	3 750	3 000	3 400	2 400	4 650	2 250	4 300	4.3
150,000	5 000	4 850	4 600	3 850	4 450	2 850	6 350	2 500	5 000	3.3
200,000	5 750	5 650	5 400	4 550	5 350	3 200	7 950	2 650	5 600	2.8
300,000	7 250	7 250	6 850	5 550	6 750	3 700	10 850	2 800	6 650	2.2
500,000	10 150	10 050	9 250	7 000	8 600	4 250	..	2 800	8 350	1.7
1,000,000	15 100	15 250	13 200	8 900	10 950	4 850	..	..	11 750	1.2
2,000,000	20 350	22 550	17 700	10 600	12 700	..	..	..	17 050	0.9
5,000,000	25 900	36 100	23 900	11 900	13 250	..	..	..	28 450	0.6
10,000,000	27 750	49 750	27 950	..	..	..	..	..	37 950	0.4
15,000,000	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	42 850	0.3
20,000,000	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	45 650	0.2

.. not applicable

## T2 Population levels at which estimates have RSEs of 25% and 50%

	NSW no.	Vic. no.	Qld. no.	SA no.	WA no.	Tas. no.	NT no.	ACT no.	Australia no.
25% RSE									
Mean duration of time spent looking for work	5 600	5 000	4 000	1 900	3 000	1 100	400	1 300	5 900
Median duration of time spent looking for work	6 300	5 500	5 100	2 500	3 800	1 400	700	1 500	7 200
All other estimates	6 300	5 400	5 100	2 600	3 500	1 400	1 100	1 400	6 800
50% RSE									
Mean duration of time spent looking for work	1 800	1 600	1 300	600	1 000	300	100	500	1 400
Median duration of time spent looking for work	2 000	1 800	1 700	800	1 200	400	200	600	1 800
All other estimates	2 000	1 800	1 700	800	1 200	500	300	600	1 600

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